

## OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring Lake Park City Council was held on December 15, 2025 at Spring Lake Park Community Center, 1301 81st Avenue N.E., at 7:00 PM.

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Mayor Wendling called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilmember Barbara Goodboe-Bisschoff

Councilmember Lisa Dircks

Councilmember April Moran

Acting Mayor Kenneth Wendling

#### MEMBERS ABSENT

Mayor Robert Nelson

#### STAFF PRESENT

Police Chief Josh Antoine, Recreation Director Anne Scanlon, Building Official Jeff Baker, Public Works Director George Linngren, Attorney John Thames, Engineer Phil Gravel, City Administrator Daniel Buchholtz

### **3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **4. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA**

Administrator Buchholtz requested the removal of Item 9A from the agenda and proposed the addition of Item 9F, pertaining to the purchase of a snowblower and a seat for the sidewalk maintenance machine.

### **5. DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR - None**

### **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Minutes – November 17, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval of November Claims List – General Disbursement #25-21 - \$225,982.90
- C. Revenue and Expense Report – November 2025
- D. Statement of Fund Balance – November 2025
- E. Resolution 2025-44, Authorizing Application for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- F. Resolution 2025-47, Accepting Donation from Spring Lake Park Lions
- G. Contractor's Licenses
- H. Business Licenses

Motion made by Acting Mayor Wendling to approve the Consent Agenda.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

## **7. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

### **A. Police Report**

Police Chief Antoine reported that the department responded to 955 calls for service in November 2025, compared to 792 calls in November 2024. He stated that November saw a higher than normal overnight enforcement effort.

School Resource Officer Imig responded to ten calls for service at the schools, conducted seven student contacts, thirty-one miscellaneous meetings, and four follow-up investigations into school related issues.

Investigator Bennek handled thirty-two cases in November, including thirty felonies and two misdemeanors. He is also monitoring three active forfeiture cases and closed one in November.

Chief Antoine provided an update on the internal selection process for the upcoming Investigator Position. He stated that officers interested in the role were required to submit a letter of intent, respond to supplemental questions, and provide case submissions for review. He stated that following this process, interviews were conducted by a panel consisting of two internal Sergeants and an external Sergeant Investigator. Chief Antoine said the three applicants were interviewed and School Resource Officer (SRO) Aaron Imig was selected to assume the Investigators role upon Officer Bennek's retirement in February.

Chief Antoine noted that the Department has initiated the process to select a new SRO, with the goal of finalizing the appointment by the end of December. He stated this timeline will allow the new SRO to train with Officer Imig in January before he transitions to the Investigators Position.

### **B. Parks and Recreation Report**

Parks and Recreation Director Scanlon provided several department updates. She stated that Public Works completed winter aeration implementation at Spring Lake to help prevent fish kill-off. She noted that a grant application for DNR RELEAF was submitted, with results expected in early February. She stated that the Department ran twenty-nine well-attended programs, including two travel shows that reached record attendance.

Director Scanlon highlighted the transition of the summer program to a full-time day format, now rebranded as Able Park Adventurers, which will also serve as the brand for

future school release day programs. She stated a Parent Information Night is scheduled for February 4, with registration opening February 9.

Director Scanlon said that there are new cooperative programs with the City of Mounds View which include Parents Night Out, Girls Studio, and Teen Outings, supported by a donation from the Spring Lake Park Lions to offset transportation costs.

Director Scanlon reported that preparations for the upcoming softball season are underway, Recreation Supervisor Waddell, a former collegiate softball athlete is leading training for umpires and coaches. She stated that additional initiatives include the Adopt-a-Flower-Garden program, aimed at revitalizing park gardens and reducing maintenance demands, recruitment for Tower Days Committee and the paid Park and Recreation Commission position. She stated that a new program, Country Jammers Community Music, will offer free drop-in sessions at Able Park.

## **8. ORDINANCES AND/OR RESOLUTIONS**

### **A. Resolution 2025-45, Adopting Final 2025 Taxes Collectable in 2026**

Administrator Buchholtz presented the proposed tax levy for 2026. He noted that the resolution established the general levy at \$4,982,100.

Administrator Buchholtz stated that from the General Revenue, \$4,310,534 will be used to fund the general operations of the City, \$24,078 will support the 2022 Street Improvement Project, \$28,421 will support the 2024 Street Improvement Project, \$204,320 will support the Capital Improvement Plan and \$414,747 covers the repayment of the 2021A G.O. Improvement Bond. He stated that the increase is primarily driven by personnel costs, inflation across operating categories, and continued capital replacement needs.

Administrator Buchholtz stated that the 2026 General Fund Budget totals \$6,118,772 and is balanced. He said revenue sources include property taxes, intergovernmental aids, licenses and permits, and service charges. He noted that the expenditures fund City Council operations, administration, public safety, public works, recreation, parks, and other essential services.

Motion made by Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff to approve Resolution 2025-45, Adopting Final 2025 property tax levy collectible in 2026.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

### **B. Resolution 2025-46, Adopting 2026 General Fund Budget**

Motion made by Councilmember Dircks to approve Resolution 2025-46, Adopting the 2026 General Fund Budget.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Approval of Lease Agreement for 8480 Highway 65 NE – True North Greens LLC – Removed
- B. Approval of Updates to SAC & WAC Loan Policy

Administrator Buchholtz presented a proposed update to the City's Sewer Access Charge (SAC) and Water Access Charge (WAC) loan policy in response to a recent business inquiry regarding the former Once Upon a Child space at the Gator Shopping Center, located at 8179 University Avenue. He said the prospective tenant's proposed use would result in SAC and WAC fees exceeding \$110,000, which the business owner indicated was beyond their available budget.

Administrator Buchholtz said the City's loan program is limited to restaurants and brew pubs. He stated that in light of the significant assessment and the Council's interest in supporting economic activity in existing retail centers, staff recommends expanding the program to include other high water-use businesses, subject to City Council approval.

Administrator Buchholtz said that the following would be changes under the new policy:

- Eligible businesses may finance SAC and WAC charges over a five-year period.
- Payments would be billed quarterly on the utility account.
- Interest would be set at the 10-year U.S. Treasury rate at the time of loan approval.
- The minimum project threshold remains \$5,000, with a maximum loan amount of \$50,000.
- Loans would be secured by a promissory note personally guaranteed by the business owner and a special assessment waiver from the property owner.
- Unpaid amounts would be treated as delinquent utility charges and eligible for property tax certification.
- All loans remain subject to City Council discretion.

Motion made by Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff to approve Updates to SAC and WAC Loan Policy.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

- C. Authorize Preparation of Plans and Bidding – 2026 Sanitary Sewer Service Clean and Grout Project

Engineer Gravel requested council authorization to proceed with plans, specifications, and bidding for the Center Sewer Grouting Project. He stated the last sewer lining project was

completed in 2023–2024, and as part of the one-year warranty televising, the inspection company also reviewed sewer laterals and building connections. He said they identified several locations with partial root obstructions.

Engineer Gravel stated that the proposed project will remove the roots and grout the laterals. He noted that the estimated construction cost is between \$90,000 and \$100,000.

Motion made by Acting Mayor Wendling to Authorize Preparation of Plans and Bidding for the 2026 Sanitary Sewer Service Clean and Grout Project.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

D. Authorize Preparation of Plans and Bidding – 2026 Seal Coat and Crack Repair Project

Engineer Gravel is requesting the City Council's authorization to prepare plans, develop specifications, and proceed with bidding for the 2026 Seal Coat Project. He stated that the project is between Monroe and Able Street and north of 81<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE.

Motion made by Councilmember Dircks to Authorize Preparation of Plans and Bidding for the 2026 Seal Coat and Crack Repair Project.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

E. Conditional Job Offer for Housing/Code Enforcement Inspector

Building Official Baker reported that the interview process for the Housing Code Enforcement Inspector position has been completed. He said the process included a thorough review of applications and one round of interviews. He has stated that a conditional job offer has been extended to Ethan Wirtz, who currently serves as a Fire Inspector for the City of Saint Paul.

Building Official Baker explained that Mr. Wirtz current role closely aligns with the responsibilities of the Housing Code Enforcement Inspector position in Spring Lake Park, particularly in conducting both commercial and residential inspections in mixed-use buildings. He requested the City Council's final approval of the hiring, contingent upon successful completion of a background check and drug screening. Building Official Baker stated that if approved Mr. Wirtz will begin employment at Grade 9, Step 1, with a starting wage of \$34.46 per hour, with an anticipated start date of January 5, 2026.

Motion made by Acting Mayor Wendling to approve Conditional Job Offer for Housing/Code Enforcement Inspector to Mr. Ethan Wirtz.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

F. Authorize Purchase of Snowblower and Seat for Sidewalk Machine

Public Works Director Linngren stated that he is requesting the City Council's approval to purchase a replacement snow blower and a seat for the Trackless sidewalk machine. He explained that the current snow blower is not the original unit, and it has been bent and repaired multiple times, and no longer performs adequately. He said the proposed replacement is a 50-inch Snow Clip blower priced at \$33,216, which will provide improved performance and can be reused when the sidewalk machine is replaced in 2027–2028. He noted that the estimated cost for a new sidewalk machine at that time will be approximately \$165,000.

Director Linngren stated that a replacement seat for the Trackless sidewalk machine, is considered the higher priority. He said the existing seat is broken and lacks air-ride suspension, causing significant operator discomfort. He noted the cost for the new seat, including installation, is \$2,583.24. Director Linngren emphasized that this upgrade is necessary for operator safety and comfort during extended snow removal operations.

He further explained that the city maintains sidewalks as part of its ordinance, which requires reliable equipment to handle heavy snowfalls.

Motion made by Councilmember Dircks to Authorize the Purchase of a Snowblower and Seat for the Sidewalk Machine,

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

## 10. REPORTS

A. Attorney's Report - None

B. Engineer's Report

Report accepted as presented.

C. Administrator Report

Administrator Buchholtz reported on a productive meeting held with representatives from the City of Mounds View, including their City Administrator and Public Works Director, to discuss the jointly managed Lakeside Park.

Administrator Buchholtz said the discussion focused on the current condition of the park and future planning for amenities and improvements. He stated as a result of the meeting,

both cities agreed to form a joint subcommittee composed of members from each city's Park Commission. He noted that the subcommittee will work collaboratively to assess the park's needs and develop a plan to ensure Lakeside Park remains a valuable asset to both communities.

## 11. OTHER

### A. Closed meeting to discuss Labor Negotiation Strategies Pursuant to M.S. 13D.03, subd. 1B

Motion made by Councilmember Dircks to adjourn the meeting to a closed session pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.03, subd. 1B

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM

Meeting reconvened at 7:38 PM

Attorney Thames reported that the City Council had just reconvened from a closed session held pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.03, subd. 1B, which allows for discussion of labor negotiation strategies. He stated that staff has been provided with direction regarding those negotiations.

## 12. ADJOURN

Motion made by Acting Mayor Wendling to adjourn.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Acting Mayor Wendling. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 PM.

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Kenneth Wendling, Acting Mayor

Attest:

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Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer